



Cherokee National Forest

USDA Forest Service

<http://fs.usda.gov/cherokee>

Visiting the Great Outdoors

Each year approximately 2 million people visit the 656,000 acre Cherokee National Forest. This area offers a variety of recreation opportunities from hiking, hunting and camping to fishing, picnicking and mountain biking.

To ensure that your visit to the great outdoors is enjoyable and memorable always put safety first! Before you participate in any outdoor activity think about the basic rules of safety that apply.



Tennessee's largest tract of public land

Spring 2014

Remember:

- National forests are remote and rugged.
- The environment in a national forest is much different than in urban areas.
- Planning your visit ahead of time may help make your visit more enjoyable and safer.
- Let someone at home know what your outing plans are.
- Always be prepared for the unexpected.
- When in doubt—ask.

Outdoor Safety Tips

Flash Flooding—A flash flood is a serious weather event for forest visitors because rising flood water is extremely dangerous—a sudden surge can claim victims in less than one minute.

There may be very little time to react. Forest visitors need to be conscious about sudden storms.

Families should discuss how they would alert each other and climb to safety if rushing water arrives.

Weather experts say the best defense is to be weather-ready before a storm hits.

When a NOAA flash flood warning is issued for your area, or the moment you

realize that water is rising around you, act quickly!

You might only have seconds to save your life.

Climb to higher ground. Do not get into a vehicle.

Monitor weather forecasts prior to and during your visit!

Flash flood web information:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/r8>





Visiting the Great Outdoors

Bear Aware— Keep in mind that black bears make their home in the Forest. Bears are opportunists by nature and will feed on whatever is readily available. To reduce the chances of a bear encounter follow these simple rules:

- NEVER feed bears;
- Do not leave food out unattended;
- Properly dispose of trash;
- Do not cook or store food in or near your tent or sleeping area;
- Keep a clean campsite;
- NEVER approach a bear;
- Keep children & pets close at hand;
- If a bear approaches you, frighten it by yelling, wave your arms—try to look big, bang pans, or throw sticks or rocks;
- If the bear is persistent, move away slowly to a secure area— never run. If in a group, stay together;
- DO respect bears and admire them from a distance.

Lost — If you become lost don't panic - stay calm! Try and remember how you got to your present location. Look for landmarks such as trails, streams, high points etc.

Try to find a high point with a good view and plan your route from there. If you find a trail or road stay on it.

Sometimes it may be wise to stay where you are and wait for help to find you. If you stay put it may help if you wait in the open where you are

clearly visible. To help draw attention use three shouts, three blasts on a whistle, three flashes of a light, three of anything is an international distress signal. If you decide to proceed go slowly. Take your time and gather your wits .

Hot Weather — Slow down.

Strenuous activities should be reduced, eliminated, or rescheduled to the coolest time of the day. Individuals at risk should stay in the coolest available place, not necessarily indoors.

Know the signs of heat stroke and heat exhaustion – *Heat Stroke*: skin hot and dry, and very high body temperature. *Heat exhaustion*: skin cool and wet from sweating, and normal body temperature.

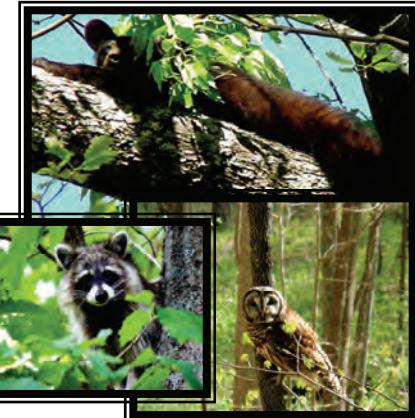
Take frequent rest periods in a cool, shady place during activity. Drink plenty of water or other non-alcohol fluids.

Don't over estimate your limits!

Waterfalls — Although waterfalls and bodies of water are beautiful and soothing, caution should be used when near them!

Watch your step when traveling near streams or waterfalls – the footing is often slippery! Stay on established trails and **do not** venture out onto waterfalls.

Exhibit caution at all times. Step back and admire the beauty before you!



Black bears and many other animals make Cherokee National Forest their home.

These are a few safety tips that may help make your visit to the great outdoors safer and more enjoyable.

*For more safety information visit the web site:
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/r8>*



Stop and smell the flowers. Take only pictures and memories, and leave only footprints.

SAFETY TIPS

